

# United Parish of Bowie

**United in Christ—Our Mission: To Serve**

**Presbyterian Church (USA) and United Church of Christ**

SUMMER 2011  
NEWSLETTER



## A Fun Summer Challenge

Summer is full of opportunities for fun, whether it is a time for you to go on that long awaited vacation or to simply enjoy a little more sunshine. One of my favorite things about summer is the more relaxed atmosphere it creates, often inspiring and allowing space for more creativity and more laughter.

I remember one summer afternoon when my family sat around a table and wrote haikus. I don't remember how we started or how it evolved but we had a blast. There were no rules... any topic was fair game. Some were funny, some were profound. And what we realized was that trying to say something meaningful within a particular structure made us explore topics in ways that we hadn't before. In a sense, it opened our eyes to a new reality that had been right in front of us all along.

Now poetry isn't necessarily my forte... and there are probably some who will think this is goofy... but I thought it might be a fun summer challenge for us to embark on a congregational experiment to express our faith journey in haikus.

For those like me who needed the explanation: Haikus are a traditional form of poetry that originated in Japan. There are three lines and no more than 17 syllables (usually the form is 5 syllables in the first line, 7 in the second, 5 in the

third) and the goal of a haiku is to point to a meaningful lived experience that evokes feeling. Whether we write about something from the past that has been meaningful, something in the present that we're dealing with now or some vision of a hoped for future, the guidelines are: 1. that what you write speaks of something that moves you, 2. it involves an observed phenomenon or lived experience and 3. when you give them to me (on paper or email) let me know if they are allowed to be shared... some may make it into the next newsletter or even in the weekly email!

So:

*Have fun and enjoy  
Peace be with you on this day  
Go write some haikus!*

- Pastor Dan

(You will find a few of my first attempts throughout the newsletter!)

*"Sometimes I wonder  
if it is possible  
to finish something"*



## Board Corner

Over the last quarter the Board has worked in several areas. One focus has been on redirecting the church's savings from CD's that currently have an almost negligible return to some other options that make better use of the Church's money. After due consideration the Board sought and received the approval of the congregation to place \$25k in a secure fund through Premier Planning Group of Annapolis. The other \$25k is to be invested with Oiko Credit which provides loans to individuals (predominantly women with families) to allow them the resources to start and maintain businesses that move them and their families from a menial existence to one of self sufficiency. Congregational approval was also acquired for this since Oiko is not Federally insured but has never missed paying it's investors in 20 years. Our return on this Oiko investment is set at 2% (better than what we were earning with our current CDs).

The other large item that has transpired this quarter was the feasibility and cost of paving the UPB parking lot. The Ministry Support Committee headed by Becky DeMeo presented the Board with four bids for the endeavor and made their recommendations. The Board approved the recommendations and the expenditure of \$45k of the Building Fund for this purpose was presented and approved in a Congregational Meeting on March 27th. Permits were secured through both PG County and the City of Bowie. A contractor was chosen and the lot is paved! Thanks again to the Ministry Support Committee for a job well done. Special thanks to the project manager, Tom Chin.

The Board continues it's focus on implementing the new Committee Structure with the hope that these Committees and their members will take

ownership of the tasks before them and decentralize much of the work to be done from the Board and the Pastor. The Board under the leadership of Pastor Dan is committed to looking for opportunities to reach out and "serve" the greater community.

In closing, it is of great importance to the Board that it keeps the Congregation informed of it's activities and be open to input and concerns from any member of the congregation. Board Meeting Minutes are kept in a binder in the church library if anyone would like to delve deeper into the activities of the Board. The Board is meant to reflect the membership of the Congregation and therefore is always open to input and suggestions from any member.

"United in Christ - Our Mission: To Serve"

- Herb Sheppard



*"Where's God? People ask  
Look within and among us  
God's faithfully here."*



United Parish of Bowie: Spring 2011



## Spiritual Formation Opportunities

### Adult Education

Rev. Dan Holland is currently leading an Adult Sunday School class: *Theology 101 part 1* at 9:45 am. It is structured around the text: *Faith Seeking Understanding* by Migliore. It will continue into June. Part 2 of this course will begin in the Fall.

We are looking for others who would like to lead **Adult Sunday School** classes for next year. Contact Bill Collins if you have something in mind or a topic that you think we should explore. We have had some interesting topics this past year and are looking forward to more dialogue and discussion in the future.

If you would like to be a part of planning the Adult Ed. Sunday School curriculum for 2011-2012, join us on Sunday, June 19<sup>th</sup> at 9:45 am. We will look at some ideas and discuss what topics are of interest. For more information, contact Bill Collins.



The **next two meetings** of the Christian Spiritual Formation Committee will be: June 26, 2011 at 12:15 pm and August 21, 2011 at 11:15 am. Lunch will be provided. Please join us as we continue to discuss the vision of the United Parish of Bowie in the areas of worship, music and Adult Education.



### Prayer Group

**Prayer Group** will meet on Tuesday, May 31st at the Holland's home at 7:00pm. Look for additional summer dates in the bulletin or on the church's calendar, located on our website. All are welcome!

### Library

Check out the Library for some interesting reads! Our current periodicals include "The Christian Century," "Sojourners," and "The Presbyterian Outlook." "The Christian Century" is a mainstream Protestant biweekly publication whose motto is "Thinking Critically, Living Faithfully". Content includes news, reviews, columns, and poetry.

"Sojourners" is a progressive, evangelical, monthly publication whose focus is "faith in action for social justice. It is published in Washington, D. C. by the Sojourners organization led by Jim Wallis. A recent cover story examines where jailed persons stand in the politics of Jesus. Other content includes feature articles, culture watch, and commentaries.

Presbyterian Outlook is an independent biweekly about matters of importance with respect to the Presbyterian Church (USA).

We also have some wonderful books available for check out. "American Grace: How Religion Divides and Unites Us," is a book widely



## Spiritual Formation Opportunities, continued

regarded as one of the most important studies of religion in America in several years. The lead author, Robert Putnam, is well known for his earlier book, "Bowling Alone," about deteriorating community life. "American Grace" looks at the broad trends of the last fifty years and also looks into the future.

Please speak with Doug Snyder about check out procedures and if you have any questions or suggested reading for the UPB Library.

- Doug Snyder, Librarian

### Choir

Thanks to the choir for a job well done on the presentation of the cantata: Covenants of Grace. It was a great way to get things going for the Lenten season. Holy Week services were very moving and well received by those in attendance.



The last choir rehearsal was Wednesday, May 25th, but the choir will continue to sing through June 19th. **Rehearsals will begin again on Wednesday, August 24th at 7:30pm in the sanctuary.**

During the choir's well deserved break over the summer, we are looking for those of you who **play instruments or sing to help out** with Special music on Sunday mornings. Contact Shirley or anyone on the Worship team to volunteer and schedule a Sunday for your talent!

## Children, Youth and Family

Special thanks to everyone who has helped to make the Children, Youth, and Family (CYF) ministries so wonderful this year. Whether you were a Sunday School teacher, made a Seeds meal, or simply kept all those children and youth in your prayers, THANK YOU!



Thank you especially to outgoing CYF chair, Amy Fuqua. Under Amy's leadership, the children, youth, and family ministries have grown in depth and in numbers. She will be very missed as she moves back to Kansas this summer. Amy will continue to head up the summer CYF programs through the end of July. Please take the time to share your appreciation before her last Sunday at UPB on July 31<sup>st</sup>.

Julissa Orta and Rebecca Holland will be taking over as CYF Co-Chairs beginning August 1<sup>st</sup>. They are both excited to work with UPB's children, youth, and families. They have already begun the process of discerning and planning for the coming year by getting congregational feedback through surveys and forums. Thank you to all who have participated!

## Children, Youth and Family, continued

The CYF Committee will have their 2011-2012 program year planning meeting on Tuesday, June 7<sup>th</sup> from 7 to 9 pm in the Holland home. After that meeting, the CYF teams will be forming and begin planning and training. Please contact Rebecca or Julissa if you are interested in being a part of the committee or volunteering on one of the teams for the coming program year!

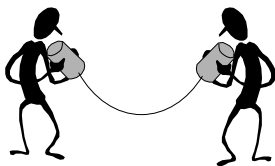
### *Summer Fun Sunday School*

On Sundays in June, July, and August, the UPB kids will be invited during worship to attend their "Summer Fun" program, a time of exploring faith through games and activities. Please talk with Amy if you are interested in volunteering to lead or be a helper on any of the summer Sundays or in the church nursery.



*"Rain makes the grass grow  
My spirit soars with sunshine  
Both happened today"*

## Communications Committee



The UPB Communications committee has been hard at work over the past program year. Meeting monthly, they spent time examining the current communications and looking at ways to improve UPB communications to better reflect the church's mission and who we are as a congregation. We read excerpts from the book Church Marketing 101: Preparing Your Church for Greater Growth by Richard Reising. The committee looked closely at both how our modes of communication help the congregation to communicate with each other and how they help the church communicate to potential members and the community. Improvements were made to almost all modes of communication and the committee is excited to continue to explore new opportunities. Be sure to thank Dina Bickel (newsletter and bulletin), Mike Mehl (website), Penny Simpson (bulletin), Robin Burgess, Alec Burgess, Ericka Swanson, and Elsie Carroll, and Rebecca Holland (chair) for all of their hard work! The committee will be meeting at the church from 8:30 to 10:30 am on June 12<sup>th</sup> (before heading to the Church in the Park worship service) to plan out the goals and communications needs for the coming year. Please let Rebecca Holland know if you are interested in joining the committee or in taking on the role of committee chair.



## Get to Know UPB: Becky DeMeo, Ministry Support Committee Chair

Becky DeMeo grew up New York, the eighth of nine kids. Faith was important to her family. She has wonderful memories of attending church as a child and participating in Sunday School and a variety of children's ministry pageants. Becky moved to New Jersey as a teenager, where she met her husband Joe. They were married in 1963 and moved to Bowie, Maryland in 1968, where they raised their two children, Joey and Lisa.

The United Parish of Bowie has been blessed to have Becky DeMeo as a member since 1975, when she was invited to attend worship by a friend. Coming to UPB, Becky felt "like she was home." She has been an active member and leader in the church, serving in almost every way possible. A banker for almost 20 years, off and on, Becky has been doing the UPB bookkeeping since 1985. So, it made sense for her to take on the role of Ministry Support Committee Chair.

Becky and her family are a part of UPB's history. When Becky's son Joey was killed in a car crash at only 19 years old, the congregation pulled together in support and was able to finish up the brand new sanctuary in time to hold Joey's memorial service, the first service conducted in the UPB sanctuary. The kitchen was donated in his memory, as well as the beautiful desk in the pastor's office. The DeMeo family is also a part of the woodwork. Becky's husband Joe built the shelves in the library, the cabinets in the preschool Sunday school room, as well as the storage shed outside.

In addition to all she does at UPB, Becky is part of a woman's volleyball league, a bowling league, and a bridge club. She loves spending time with her granddaughters Sarah, Julia, and Anna. When asked if there was anything people at UPB didn't know about her, she thought folks might not know that she has no middle name and that she was once a model and participated in several fashion shows, including one with Grace Kelly in attendance.



*Alissa Barbato received her MFA in Ceramics from the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) on 5/21/2011. According to her, this will be her final degree. She will be moving back to Annapolis later this summer, and, hopefully, finding a job.*

*Congratulations, Alissa!*



## Membership and Fellowship Opportunities

The Membership and Fellowship Committee is a small group. We would welcome new members and any ideas that you might have for future events. Please contact Marva with your ideas.

*"All people know pain  
Way too many feel alone  
Things could be different"*

### Lenten Dinner Series Summary

We hope the Lenten Dinner Series provided a time of fellowship and informative presentations about the wonderful organizations the United Parish assists. These organizations included Central Union Mission, Bowie Food Pantry, Family Crisis Center, One Great Hour of Sharing, and Sarojini mission work in India and Indonesia. Here's a summary in case you missed it!

We were fortunate to have Central Union Mission's executive director, David Treadwell, as principal speaker, along with a staff person who is also a former program participant. Two current participants also were there to tell their stories. Although United Parish's contributions have been backpacks and gifts to assist the Mission's special programs for children, we learned that its primary program is to get homeless men off the streets and into a residential program that prepares them to become employable and self-sufficient again. A key element is a spiritual transformation program. One goal is to reunite them with their families. Central Union Mission is in its 126<sup>th</sup> year.

Two representatives from the Bowie Food Pantry gave us a brief history of the Pantry. It started as a City program; now it is an Interfaith program located at the Christian Community Presbyterian Church. The City still provides partial support to

the Pantry through grants. About eighteen-to-twenty clients come each day the Pantry is open, primarily Monday-Wednesday-Friday mornings. Recently, the Pantry also began opening on Tuesday evenings from six to seven. All clients are interviewed to assess need. Most participants come in once a week. In 2010 the Pantry served 200 clients a month, and provided 267,000 pounds of food. Volunteers use monetary contributions to purchase fresh fruit and vegetables to supplement donated items. Food Pantry personnel also offer resource and referral services for state community assistance and job listings.

The recently appointed director of the Family Crisis Center told us about half of the abused women who contact the Center are placed in the Safe Passage Emergency Shelter, which now can house up to 55 persons daily. The Crisis Center maintains a Crisis Hotline. It also provides a Family Violence Intervention Clinic, which conducts individual and group therapy sessions for abusers, survivors, and victims of domestic violence. Sessions are also available for Spanish speakers. The County's Department of Family Services has a program which allows Safe Passage and Clinic participations to receive free tuition at Prince George's Community College for training/certification in a variety of areas.

Using a teleconference format, Susan Sanders, the Minister and Team Leader for Global Sharing of Resources (One Hour of Sharing) for the United Church of Christ shared some facts about the program which should be helpful to our congregation. This program's three priorities are disaster assistance, refugee aid, and help for developing countries. Eight denominations participate in this program; however each one maintains its own financial accounts. This explains why the United Parish sends half of our



## Membership and Fellowship , continued

donations to the Presbyterian Church and half to the United Church of Christ (UCC). The Ecumenical Committee meets three times a year. One purpose of these meetings is to identify joint projects. We learned that the current national UCC budget for One Great Hour of Sharing is three million dollars.

Our own member, Josi Hillary, a key participant, gave an inspiring talk about the Sarojini Orphanage Trust program whose mission is to touch the lives of the disadvantaged high school graduates from remote parts of India and Indonesia by supporting them with a university education to become professionals and transforming agents in their community. Extreme economic inequality coupled with the belief of those at the top of the caste system that the lower caste people are where they are meant to be. It was this state of affairs that inspired him to get involved first in India, and later in Indonesia.

- Doug Snyder



*Enjoy Church in the Park !  
June 12<sup>th</sup> at Allen Pond Park  
in the West Pavilion with a  
picnic to follow.*

*"Reading the scripture  
Christ revealed in the pages  
my eyes were opened"*

### Calendar of Upcoming Special Events

Sun. June 5 <sup>th</sup>	9:30am Teacher Appreciation Brunch for all who taught or were shepherds in pre-k through adult ed. Appreciation AND Chartering Sunday – Celebrate the anniversary of UPB's charter and take time to appreciate all who have made a difference at UPB this year – Cake to follow worship.
Tues. June 7 <sup>th</sup>	CYF Committee 2011-2012 Planning Meeting 7 pm in the Holland Home
Sat. June 11 <sup>th</sup>	Youth Group Campout!
Sun. June 12 <sup>th</sup>	Church in the Park – Allen Pond Park at 11 am with a picnic to follow
Sun. June 19 <sup>th</sup>	Father's Day and Children's Sermon during Worship
Fri. June 24 <sup>th</sup>	Baysox game @ 7:05 pm. Meet at the game on the 3 <sup>rd</sup> base side
Sun. July 17 <sup>th</sup>	Children's Sermon during Worship
Sun. July 17 <sup>th</sup>	Art and Music Camp Volunteer Meeting following worship
Wed. July 20 <sup>th</sup>	Youth Group Six Flags Day!
Sun. July 24 <sup>th</sup>	Art and Music Camp Volunteer Commissioning during worship
Sun. July 24 <sup>th</sup>	Youth Group after worship
July 25 <sup>th</sup> to 29 <sup>th</sup>	Art and Music Camp! 9am— Noon
Sun. July 31 <sup>st</sup>	Kid Led Sunday Worship Service with Ice Cream Social to follow
Fri. August 12 <sup>th</sup>	Baysox game @ 7:05 pm. Meet at the game on the 3 <sup>rd</sup> base side
Sun. August 14 <sup>th</sup>	Youth Group after worship
Sun. August 21 <sup>st</sup>	Back to School Sunday (bring your bag) and Children's Sermon during Worship

## Mission and Service Committee

If you were able to attend the Lenten Dinner Series, you heard directly from our mission partner organizations what a difference our time, talent, and monetary donations are making in the community and in the world.

*"United Parish  
Filled with untold potential  
Amazing people"*

### Looking back...

I never cease to be amazed at the generous contributions of UPB! On April 9<sup>th</sup>, we joined with the Village Baptist Church to provide dinner (chili, corn bread, salad, and dessert) for the "Warm Nights" participants. On April 10<sup>th</sup>, the sign up for the Family Crisis Center (FCC) meal for the following week was sent around and completely filled! At the same time we were receiving donations of candy, small toys, games, and monetary donations for the Easter Baskets for the children at the Family Crisis Center. Thank you!

### Looking forward...

The committee will be meeting soon to discuss new opportunities and potential

organizations to provide financial support for local, regional, and global needs.

### Ongoing Opportunities:

#### *Living Waters for the World (LWW)*

Getting kids involved in the ministry of helping others is the best way to teach them about how we are to serve others and follow the example that Jesus gave us. Support the children's service project, Living Waters for the World, by donating your change to the large water bottle in the Narthex.

#### *Bowie Interfaith Food Pantry*

Please continue to bring non-perishable food donations for the pantry. You may also drop fresh produce – vegetables, fruits from your gardens or local markets directly at the pantry on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays between 9:00-11:00am.

#### *Family Crisis Center*

Please look for the sign up during worship on the second Sunday of the month. Prepare a portion of the meal at home and bring with you to church on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday.

Bring your old or broken cell phones and chargers and drop in the box in the narthex.

Through its partnership with the Verizon HopeLine Program, the family crisis center can turn these items into cash to support their program.

#### *One Great Hour of Sharing*

Donate to this special offering taken the first Sunday of each month.

#### *Family Crisis Center*

Prepare a portion of the Family Crisis Center meal on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month.

#### *Sarojini Orphanage Trust (SOTI)*

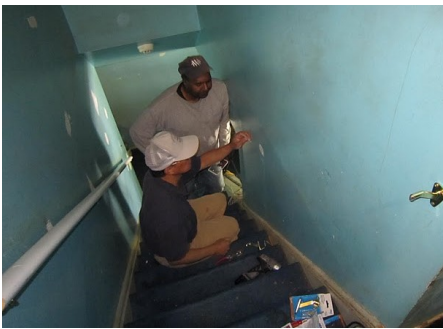
Provide financial support to SOTI whose mission is to touch the lives of the disadvantaged high school graduates from remote parts of India and Indonesia by empowering them with a university education.

## Mission and Service Committee, continued

### *United Campus Ministry (UCM)*

Provide financial support to United Campus Ministry (UCM), one of 14 recognized chaplaincies at the University of Maryland, College Park. UCM provides students with a safe place to nurture and explore their faith in God.

- Mary Joe Munnelly



### *Christmas in April*

Sixteen members of the United Parish of Bowie along with members of the Trinity Episcopal Church of Upper Marlboro gathered in Landover, Maryland on Saturday, April 30th for this annual event. The work included replacing all kitchen cabinets and countertops, repairing bathroom plumbing, rewiring outlets, an extensive repair of the front sidewalk to remove a huge tree root and replace with fresh concrete, spackle and paint several rooms, rewire and add two rear porch lights, repair and add several stair handrails, cleaning debris and manicuring both front and backyards as well as tending to several distressed house plants. Everyone took on their own task and it was a long day for some. Many made friends with "Suitor" the owner's 8 month old pup (a real sweetie). Coffee was provided by UPB while Trinity supplied lunch from Subway. I've been informed by the House Captain that Mrs. King, the home owner, was delighted with everything that was accomplished. The weather was perfect, the cooperation by everyone was outstanding, and the results were tremendous. Another successful outreach due to the generosity of the members of UPB. Many thanks to all who participated. See you next year!

- Herb Sheppard



**Summer 2011**



**Worship in June: 11am; July-August: 10am**

Nursery Care Available for Infants and Young Children

Sunday School Available for Preschool to Elementary Children

## **Art & Music Camp**

**July 25th — Noon, 9am — 12pm**

Fun, Faith, and Fellowship for Children 3 yrs. old to 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Explore the "Fruits of the Spirit" love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22) through art, music, drama, and games. Cost: \$25.

Visit [www.unitedparishbowie.org](http://www.unitedparishbowie.org)  
for more information and to register!



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